

MAP. Measures of Academic Progress

MAP is a computerized test based on a continuum of skills in math and reading. Essentially it is one long test rather than a series of shorter tests that assess students over specific criteria at various grade levels. MAP assessments are not tests that determine mastery. Rather, MAP assessments provide teachers with *instructional* levels for each student. They provide a road map for determining where each student is performing in relation Montana standards and MCPS curriculum.

In MAP a large, computerized question bank makes it possible for all students to receive questions specific to their learning level. For example, the first question is “chosen” based on the student’s previous test results. When students respond correctly they are given a more difficult question; if they are incorrect they are given an easier question. In this way the MAP assessment hones in on the area where the student is currently responding successfully and then outlines the next learning steps. Unlike tests that report results in percentiles, MAP uses an equal interval scale called RIT (think “inch”). With the RIT scale it is possible to accurately measure each student’s learning over time.

MAP is the computerized version of MALT (Missoula Achievement Level Test) which was used successfully in Missoula for 6-8 years. Its use was discontinued when Montana chose to use MONTCAS as the state criterion referenced test. MAP has been used successfully for the past two years in Title 1 schools.

Formative Assessment

Formative assessments are either designed by a group of teachers from the curriculum they are teaching or are part of the District adopted teaching materials. Formative assessments give teachers and students up to the minute information about what and how well each student is learning the curriculum content. This information allows teachers to make timely teaching adjustments that either can provide students with more learning opportunities for the content being taught or let the teacher know that the learning is progressing smoothly and it’s time to move to the next learning steps.

Although the information from ongoing, formative assessment is important for teachers, it can be even more important for student learning. Research has found that students getting ongoing feedback from formative assessment learn as well as if they were having a 1-on-1 tutor.